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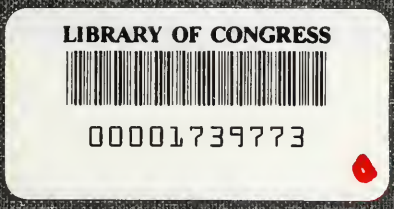

A Martyr to the Truth.

A

SERMON

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE DEATH OF

REV. CHARLES T. TORREY,

IN THE MARYLAND PENITENTIARY, MAY 9, 1846.

DELIVERED AT FISHERVILLE; AND ALSO IN THE BAPTIST MEETING-HOUSE IN CONCORD, MAY 31, 1846.

BY EDMUND WORTH,
PASTOR OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH, FISHERVILLE.

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SERMON.

Matt. 14; 3, 4. For Herod had laid hold on John, and bound him, and put him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife. For John said unto him, it is not lawful for thee to have her.

Ever since the fall of man, there has been a conflict between the serpent and the seed of the woman. The warfare has been constant and sometimes severe. The great antagonist principles, are truth and error. The conflict is a moral one, and recognizes the outward act and the inward emotions of the heart.

In every age of the world, God has raised up and employed faithful witnesses to testify to the truth and defend his cause. Against these opposition has been raised; individuals have contended, and, not unfrequently, civil authority has been employed to overcome and destroy.—A faithful, plain and practical exhibition of the truth, is what the world has never been willing to receive in a candid and peaceful manner. Light is no more opposed to darkness, than is truth to error—or the will of God, to the inclinations of the natural heart. Consequently, when these come in contact, opposition is manifested. From the time of righteous Abel to the present, the faithful servants of God have fallen on the battle ground—shed their blood in the struggle and yielded their lives in the conflict. The Old Testament history goes to confirm this statement—the prophets, embassadors for God and truth, were opposed, persecuted, imprisoned and put to death. In consequence of their plainness and integrity, though men of God, and singularly meek and pious, they became the objects of hate and the most embittered opposition. On opening the New Testament, we find recorded the martyrdom of the first minister of the gospel. And although our Savior came on a mission of mercy, and his advent was heralded by an angelic choir in songs of "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will to men;" though the principles of his gospel were the out-gushings

of love, truth and righteousness, and were connected with the highest good of man and the glory of God, and he himself was a personification of meekness, kindness and virtue—yet his gospel was rejected, and he was slandered and persecuted unto death. Though a minister of peace, his mission was a moral warfare. This he intimated when he said;—"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law." Such would not be the *necessary* but the *natural* effect of the inculcation of his gospel. Had all received and obeyed the truth, union and *peace* would have followed—but, some receiving, and others rejecting the truth, would cause divisions, even in the same family. Christ came not to send peace by preaching smooth things, encouraging men on in a course of sin—but to reprove and warn; to attack the enemy in his strong holds, by wielding the mighty weapons of truth.—This would be like employing the sword; the friends of truth and error would enlist under their respective banners, marshalled for the conflict.

The Saviour also forewarned his disciples of the treatment they should receive at the hands of their enemies. He says to them just before his departure, "they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. *Which shall be for a testimony against them.*" This prediction was fulfilled—the apostles, as well as Christ, were charged with violating the civil law; were arraigned, imprisoned, and finally put to death. John, the harbinger of Christ, was shut up in prison because he advocated the truth—inculcated the principles of the gospel and declared its prohibitions to Herod; and was afterwards put to death by order of that wicked prince.

The word of God—observation and experience, show us very plainly that Truth produces hostility.

Not that *truth* has power to create *opposition*—but it calls it into exercise, and sets the opposer in array against itself. Its exhibition and application is the occasion of putting in motion and drawing out, the hidden opposition of the heart. It stirs up and aggravates—hostility foments and overflows in bitter enmity and ripens into violent acts of revenge. You might as well expect the animal to lie unmoved under the whip, or that the conscience will remain quiet and submissive under the application of truth, and not attempt to resist its unwelcome lashes. It is either subdued after a brief struggle,

and yields to the sceptre and dominion of truth—or, resisting, is wrought up to phrenzied madness, foams and rages, and seals its own death warrant by acts of the most atrocious malignity and daring wickedness.

Opposition to the truth is exhibited,

1. By refusing to submit to its claims.

There are individuals, who, by their daily course, show that their hearts are opposed to the requirements of God; while there are others, who, by a moral life, hide the enmity of their hearts from the world. Indeed they may be ignorant of it themselves, and fancy they are the friends of God. But let the opposing elements meet; let the precepts of the gospel be applied, the requirements of God revealed and enforced, and what a struggle! He, who thought himself free from opposition of heart, and even the friend of God, now finds a war raging within. The divine law is too strict, its penalty too severe, and unjust; and, were it in his power, he would annul the whole, and change the essential features in the character and government of Jehovah.

From the time of our first parents, what a practical illustration has been furnished of the continued opposition of the human mind to the principles of truth. A revolt has been perpetuated down to the present time; it is discovered through all the ramifications of society—in heathen and christian nations, and even among the professed followers of Christ. There has ever been a tendency to lower down the standard of truth, to secularize its claims and tarnish its glory. The will of man has been substituted for the authority of God, and human tradition, for the rules of Christ.

Unholy influences have obtruded within the pale of the church, and a worldly, time serving policy has trampled upon consecrated ground. Selfish interests and unholy ambition have mingled with the fires of the altar, and polluted the sacrifices of Zion. Truth—pure unadulterated truth, was committed in trust with the people of God; they were to imbibe, and cherish, and exhibit its holy and elevating principles, to be governed by its precepts and walk in its light. But where is the person, who is a living, practical illustration of the truth as it is in Jesus? How few among all the sacramental host, are contending earnestly for the faith, once delivered to the saints, and who maintain unsullied their christian integrity. How few are seen, having on the whole armor—going forth in the panoply of truth, uninfluenced by frowns or favor, or a worldly expediency—undismayed by stripes, imprisonment or martyrdom. How seldom do we hear such, like the great Founder of Christianity and his early followers,

lifting up their voices like a trumpet against all manner of sin, in high places and low places, whether among rulers or subjects. We have reason to fear that but little of the religion of the present day, is untrammelled and free—perfectly free from selfish, social or political influences. How seldom is all—is every thing sacrificed, completely immolated on the altar of eternal truth. What timidity and trembling—what an unwillingness to throw off every shackle, come out fearlessly and take a stand on the platform of truth, which is as broad as the heavens and as deep as the foundations of eternity.

A glance at the moral condition of the world presents a sad picture of a rejection of the truth. Instead of universal holiness and purity, and loyalty to God, and kindness, brotherly love and strict integrity towards man—we see the workings of opposition to the truth, in profanity, licentiousness, gambling, runselling and rum-drinking, Sabbath breaking, horseracing, slavery, robbery, murder, deceit and dishonesty; and all this too in civilized, christian lands, to say nothing of the abominations of heathenism, which cannot be more hateful in the sight of the Lord. In our own land, the great law proclaimed by the ever adorable Redeemer, "all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them," is scarcely recognized in commercial intercourse; and the fulfilling of its letter is even prohibited by the laws of some of our State governments. To act on christian principle and carry out the spirit of the gospel—doing unto others as we would they should do unto us; and remembering those in bonds as bound with them, would forfeit one's liberty and life, in some parts of this, the most *free* and *christian* nation on the face of the whole earth! How humiliating the fact that *truth* is not allowed to go forth unshackled to combat *error*—that they may not take the field without let or hinderance and go to the conflict, each to rise or fall on its own intrinsic merit. But in this country, truth is not free—there are topics on which it cannot be uttered—errors which it is not allowed to combat. Hence, the muzzling of the press—its destruction by the mob—and the incendiary opening of the mails and destroying whatever is offensive to a self made, aristocratic censorship, dictating to a free people what they may or may not circulate by their own conveyance. Hence, the riotous assemblages to suppress free discussion—the personal violence—abusive treatment—and the dreary imprisonments and cold blooded murder of *free, christian citizens!* All to silence the truth: that truth which was laying bare and exposing the most heinous sins to the gaze of an astonished world. The powers of darkness trembled; for one

of the strongest holds of iniquity was attacked by the most powerful and effectual of all weapons, *the sword of truth*—a desperate effort must be made to shiver its glittering blade or turn its fatal edge, and recourse is had to the violence of the mob.

So it was in the days of John, of Christ, and the apostles. Herod did not deny the truth of the allegations of the Baptist, but, like a guilty man, he stops his mouth with the key of the prison, and stifles the utterance of truth in the silence of the dungeon. So of our Savior; the wicked world could not endure his close preaching, his withering reproofs and searching appeals, and to close the voice of truth, his guilty accusers employ vinegar and gall, the nails, the hammer and the cross! The same spirit has ever been manifested in opposition to the claims of truth.

2. Opposition to the truth is manifested in attempting to support error by false reasoning. Look at the course of Felix: he had no relish for the wholesome preaching of his prisoner—no, in heart and life he was opposed to the truth. But did he condemn Paul, or attempt to confute him by sound argument; or did he yield to the claims of truth? Neither, but he excused his present neglect from a want of time; and flattered his conscience to continue in sin by a promise of future consideration. Both pleas were in defence of a course of opposition, but they were based on false premises.

Very many act as though, could the impression of truth be obliterated from the mind, and the voice of conscience hushed, the reality would be destroyed. That, as they can persuade themselves to believe, will it prove to be true in matter of fact. Hence, selfish interests and carnal desires will overpower reason, destroy the force of sound argument and lead a person to believe, what at first was unwelcome and revolting. Over such, sound reasoning has little influence, appeals of truth find no response in the conscience, and persuation is nearly useless.

But, however subtle the sophistry, and deceptive the course, by which the mind is led to reject the truth and defend error—is the truth in the least affected, or impaired—by no means, for, says the apostle, "we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth." It still exists, amid every opposing influence; and let the whole world reject it—that very truth would shine with increased lustre and more awful grandeur, in sealing the condemnation of its rejectors! Herod thought to stifle the voice of truth, and his own conscience, and hide his sin by imprisoning his accuser, but that very act was based on false reasoning—it increased his guilt, adding false imprisonment and mur-

der, to adultery; and gave celebrity to the enormity of his crime, by publishing it, through the gospel, to all coming ages.

The enemies of Christ maintained their opposition to him on the pretence that he was a false teacher, and a blasphemer; that he infringed on the laws of the government and that the peace of the nation required he should die.—To sustain these accusations, they employed false witnesses, and accomplished their end, by falsehood.

There is American slavery!—the whole system is sustained by false constructions. That one man has a right, natural, civil, or moral, in another, is false. No man has a right to place himself under the abject control of another. The very nature and constitution of God's moral government forbids it. It is of no avail that laws are produced that sanction slavery—there is a law above all human law, the same in all time; "it is the law written by the finger of God on the heart of man, and by that law, unchangable and eternal, while men despise fraud, and loathe rapine, and abhor blood, they will reject with indignation, the wild phantasy, that man can hold property in man." Destitute of divine authority to sustain the bloody system, false reasoning is employed, penal enactments are required, to keep the slave in ignorance, and prevent his being treated as a man and a christian—stripes and death are inflicted to secure submission, and *enforce* what *truth* nor *justice* could never do.

Efforts in behalf of the oppressed in New England have been opposed, on the plea that "it is a political matter." And must man who feels for man—must christians who breathe the spirit of Christ, be compelled to withhold human kindness, and prohibited from carrying out the great, distinguishing principles of the gospel, because "it is a political matter!" Is the argument sound? Was it not a "political matter" with Daniel and the three Worthies when commanded to act contrary to their obligations to God; and did they violate christian principles rather than not conform to civil enactments? Undoubtedly Herod supposed he had a right, as a prince, to regulate *his* "domestic institutions," and that no subject would have the presumption to oppose. He assumed a false position. Admit his right—made legal by human authority—but John in the face of all this declares, "It is not lawful for thee to have her." His civil rights gave him no leave to violate the laws of God, nor did the regalia of royalty screen him from the faithful rebuke of the preacher of repentance.

Civil enactments are thrown around slavery, and its opponents are met with the plea, it is legal—protected by law

and no one has a right to attack the system. But is this reasoning sound? Can Legislative action justify a system of the most abominable iniquity, remove the guilt of crime and screen the offender? Can human law interpose between man and his obligations to God, throw off moral responsibilities and so change the order of nature that man shall no longer be the friend of man?

It is a command from heaven that we search the Scriptures—this is the duty of all. The united voice of all Protestants, too, is, that *every individual* has the right to read the Bible and judge for himself. But slaveholders say that to give the Bible to slaves and learn them to read it, would destroy slavery. And for its perpetuity the laws say, thou shalt not learn to read—thou shalt not search the Scriptures. But, if the slave owe a duty to God—if it be his right and for his interest, to possess and search the Scriptures, does not God make it our duty to give his word to the destitute and needy bondman? This is a serious question which is beginning to press itself upon us, and to which we must yet give a direct reply. But, by the reasoning of slaveholders it is necessary for the safety of slavery, to enact laws in direct violation of the spirit of the gospel and commands of God; and those, who have gone as agents of the Bible Society to distribute the bread of life, and who have ignorantly and innocently put a Bible into the hand of a slave, have actually been imprisoned, whose lives were endangered by the violence of the populace. According to civil enactments in this enlightend, christian land, it is *a crime to give a man the Bible*. But is not the whole process of such reasoning based on false premises—are not such enactments impious and Heaven daring? No institution, recognized by laws, opposed to truth and the spirit of the gospel, ought to be held free from attack and exposure on the ground of its legality. Duty to God and man, nor the decision of the great day will never sustain such a plea.

3. Opposition to the truth is manifested in hostility to those who advocate its claims. Though this hostility may not always be openly avowed, still it is discovered.—It is not the individual or his views, which are so obnoxious, but his measures. "I am opposed to intemperance, or slavery, &c., as much as any one, but the measures I do not like." True, there may be improper measures in promoting any good cause—these we need not approve—nor, on this account should we oppose or abandon the truth.—After all these professions, it is the truth which is advocated that draws forth personal hate and opposition. Herod respected John, as an individual; he "feared him, knowing he was a just man and an holy—and heard him glad-

ly;" but the truth he could not endure, and, to destroy its influence, that he might indulge in his sins, he shuts up this bold reformer in prison. John was not a dangerous man; Herod knew that he was "just and holy"—and was there sufficient cause of alarm? No, only as the friend of God and truth, he attacks sin and disturbs the peace and security of the sinner.

There was Paul, the bold, intrepid advocate of truth.—When zealously engaged against the truth, imprisoning men and women, he was not opposed and persecuted.—The peace of society or of the government do not appear to be disturbed. But, mark the change. As soon as he breathes the christian spirit and attacks the sins of the people, whole cities are filled with confusion. The citizens of Ephesus caught Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul's companions in travel, and rushed into the theatre; some crying one thing and some another, for the assembly was confused. Not unlike this, have been scenes even in New England within the last ten years. But why was Paul more dangerous now, than when persecuting the followers of Christ? Why did Jews and Gentiles unite with their rulers to stone him; why was it charged against him and Silas, before the rulers, "these men do exceedingly trouble our city"—and why were they beaten, and cast into prison with "their feet fast in the stocks,"—because they advocated the truth. The city of Ephesus was thrown into confusion because Paul had attacked the sin of idolatry: not that the conscience was so much affected as the purse, for said the manufacturer of idols, "our craft is in danger"—"for by this craft we have our living."

There were Peter and John, harmless men, but bold in the truth. The officers of government were grieved because they preached the doctrines of the gospel. And what did they do?—they employed violent measures; "laid hands upon them and put them in the hold." The next day they came together and examined them, heard their doctrine, saw the man they had healed—and "they could say nothing against it." But that the truth "spread no farther among the people," they said, "let us threaten them, that they speak henceforth to no man in his name." But what was their reply—"Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye." Thus they were commanded by authority to desist; but in their prayer to God, after "being let go" they said, "and now, Lord, behold their threatenings; and grant unto thy servants, that *with all boldness they may speak thy word.*" And God manifested his approbation, for at the close of their prayer the place was shaken, "and

they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness."

There was Stephen, too, a humble but bold advocate of the truth—and because he faithfully declared the truth, the people "gnashed on him with their teeth," and stoned him to death.

And what is the record of the old Testament history? There was Hanai, the seer, who faithfully rebuked Asa the King, for his folly, and Asa was wroth with the servant of God "and put him in a prison-house; because he was in a rage with him because of this thing." When Zechariah stood up before the people and told them why they could not prosper—"ye have forsaken the Lord, and he hath forsaken you," they conspired against him and stoned him with stones, at the commandment of the king, in the house of the Lord; and his dying words were, "the Lord look upon it and reward it." He lost his life for showing the people the cause of their adversity, and pointing out a way of deliverance.

Then, besides many instances more similar to the above, furnished by the sacred historian, there is the long list of martyrs, who were persecuted to death, for the truth, all of which shows that it is no new thing for the faithful servants of God to suffer for well doing.

II. The second general division of my subject, is, THAT GOD HAS ALWAYS MANIFESTED A PARTICULAR REGARD FOR THE TRUTH. This he has done,

1. By raising up men of great boldness and integrity in the different ages of the world, adapted to the exigency, to show the people their sins and declare the way of truth and righteousness. As when Israel "killed his prophets and digged down his altars," the Lord reserved to himself seven thousand men, who were true to his cause, so he has never been without his witnesses in the world, nor truth without its advocates. When his covenant people departed from him, the Lord sent his prophets to call after them and bring them back. But I must not dwell.

2. God has shown his regard for the truth by the infliction of his judgments upon the obstinate. Though he bears long, he is faithful to vindicate the truth. Look at his dealings with the antideluvian world: then with the Egyptians, who enslaved his people and sorely oppressed them. He raised up Moses and Aaron to make known his will to Pharaoh, and require him to let the people go. He gave him ample time to comply, but he only filled up the measure of his iniquity. That wicked prince would not let the oppressed go free—their cries were heard and their wrongs were signally avenged upon their oppressors.

Again, God suffered long with the Jewish nation—and

raised, up men, to "cry aloud and spare not—to lift their voice like a trumpet, and show the people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins. But they would not hear—if these messengers from the Lord would not speak "smooth things," "prophesy deceit," "cry peace," and keep back the truth, they must be imprisoned, and put to death. Though God waited long, and at last sent his own Son, whom they also killed—the day of retribution came. "Fill ye up." says Christ, "the measure of your fathers. That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zecharias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar."

If time would allow, we might collect from modern history examples of the fearful but righteous exhibitions of God's displeasure against sin, and his vindication of truth. The cruelty of princes has been visited upon themselves, and the corruption of nations have wrought out their overthrow.

And if the government of this nation is ever overturned, it will be done through sin and error. Truth, virtue nor holiness will never do it. What that sin or form of error may be, is unknown to us. As nations increase in years and population, crime and corruption increase even in a greater ratio. Such is evidently the case in this country, which may well excite the deepest solicitude. That sin which has the greatest influence over this nation at the present time—which sways its councils, disturbs its peace and threatens the perpetuity of our civil and religious institutions, is slavery. Facts and figures show this so plainly that no one familiar with them will doubt the truth of the assertion. And one of two things we may rest assured is morally certain; *the system of Slavery must cease*, or it *will effect our overthrow*. May God give us repentance and effect the former.

The cry has long been, "cease agitating the subject—let us alone—we will take care of ourselves and our institutions." Not so; slaveholders cannot protect themselves in their present course. Why—because truth and justice, humanity and religion, and the Majesty of the universe, are all arrayed against them. God has not a single attribute in all his character that can side with slavery. The cry of the oppressed has gone up to the Avenger of wrong, and nothing but repentance can avert long merited judgments. Well might that distinguished statesman, Jefferson, exclaim, in view of the abominations of slavery, *I tremble when I remember that God is just.*

The voice of opposition might, indeed, be hushed, and all efforts to show the oppressor his sin, and remove the

cursed system, cease—but it would only be like an attempt to smother the deep gathering fires of Vesuvius, which, pent up, will by and by break forth, causing tenfold more terror and desolation. The smothered fires of slavery would burn deeper and spread wider, undermining the very foundations of our national fabric, and, when bursting forth, would cause a fearful overthrow. It is not difficult to perceive that the system of slavery contains within itself the elements of our nation's ruin.

But God has evidently raised up individuals and inspired their hearts with holy zeal in the cause of freedom, justice and humanity; he has moved upon his people to lift up their voice and expose the sin of slavery, and call upon the slaveholder to repent and let the oppressed go free. He is waiting the result—as he did with Pharaoh, and what shall it be? I verily believe that as a nation, we are experiencing a time of trial, and probation, as much as did the Egyptians; that God is calling loudly upon us to put away this sin; and, unless we repent, the day of solemn visitation is not far distant, and our destruction is as sure as that of Pharaoh and his host.

III. My third general remark is, THE REMOVAL OF MEN VALIANT FOR THE TRUTH, FROM THEIR LABORS, IS AN EVENT CALCULATED TO PRODUCE SERIOUS REFLECTIONS.

1. Such men possess qualifications, which render their continuance in active life very desirable. Those most likely to succeed in great moral revolutions, and bless the world by their labors, are such as possess fixed moral principles—expansive benevolence—moral courage and great practical wisdom. A bright galaxy of the names of such is seen in the moral heavens, whom God has raised up to plead his cause. As an illustration, see what incalculable blessings have been secured to the world through the agency of Luther, of Howard, and of Wilberforce. See, too, the christian and philanthropic devotion of Mills and Boardman—of Crandall, Lovejoy and Torrey—their all was consecrated to God, and the good of man. To be deprived of the labors of such men, would naturally cause grief and despondency. The inquiry starts almost, involuntarily, does not God frown on the cause which they had espoused; or, why should he remove laborers so well adapted to carry it on? This grief is deepened by the reflection that such men are few, compared with the magnitude of the work yet to be accomplished; and on seeing one removed after another, the anxious inquiry arises "by whom shall Jacob arise?" Who will go forth as faithful heralds of the cross—who will plead the cause of the dumb? Who will go forth in the majesty of truth and expose the sins of the world; and break the death-like

slumber of man; and, by a mighty moral effort, turn the tide of vice, injustice and cruelty, which have so long rolled their deadly stream over the land?

2. Another name has been added to the list of those who have been cut down in the midst of their labors.—Yes, the name of CHARLES T. TORREY is now on the record of departed martyrs to the cause of humanity, a name which will long, long live in the grateful remembrance of the virtuous and humane.

There are circumstances connected with Mr. Torrey's death, peculiarly painful and afflictive. He must be considered a murdered man—murdered legally, it may be said, according to law. He may be censured by some, and his death charged to his imprudence—of this I leave every one to be his own judge. There is no doubt, had Daniel and the three Worthies lost their lives, in obeying the claims of religion, though in violation of civil authority—but what the enemy would have exultingly charged their death to their rashness and indiscretion. So of John—his friends might charge him with imprudence in reproving Herod, whose vicious character he knew; he had better remained silent, than to provoke one, whose sin was legalized by law, or sanctioned by common usage, and who had power to take his life—and so he fell a victim to his misguided zeal. But do you suppose Herod's prisoner relented—did his heart reproach him? Did not rather the testimony of his conscience dispel the gloom and ease the bonds of his imprisonment?

Mr. Torrey was a Congregational clergyman, and stood high in the estimation of the members of his own communion and of the community generally. He was born at Scituate, Mass., in 1813; his parents died when he was but four years old. He was educated at Exeter, Yale College, and the Institution at Andover. He was settled in the pastoral office at Providence, R. I., and afterwards at Salem, Mass. His sympathies were deeply enlisted in behalf of the oppressed, whose wrongs possessed the inmost chambers of his soul, and he became ardently devoto the cause of human freedom. To extend the blessings of the gospel; liberty, social, civil and religious, to the degraded captive; to give a boon so precious to three millions of his fellow men, was a work from which he could not withhold the utmost energies of his soul.—He possessed humane and pious feelings. His heart beat with the sympathies of a *man* and a *christian*. He had imbibed the spirit of his Master, who came down from heaven to die for man, and he was impelled to seek and save the lost.

Some four years since, Mr. Torrey attended a Conven-

tion of slaveholders in Maryland; and was there imprisoned for reporting the proceedings for a Northern paper. While in jail at that time, it is said he formed a paln for assisting fugitives, through the agency of which, between 300 and 400 had effected their escape, previous to his last arrest, who are now enjoying the blessings of freedom. In June 1844, he was arrested in Baltimore, and tried the last of November following, on the charge of aiding the escape of slaves, was adjudged guilty on the 1st of December 1844, and was condemned to six years confinement in the state Penitentiary. A requisition was in preparation from Virginia, to be enforced at the expiration of his six years' sentence in Maryland.

The circumstances connected with the charges against him are briefly these:—"Emily Webb was born a slave; her husband, John Webb was the property of Bushrod Taylor of Winchester. Emily herself was born both the slave and daughter of a Virginia gentleman by the name of Carr, who treated her kindly and delivered her over to her white brother. He designed to emancipate her, but dying intemperate,yielded to evil counsel and she became the slave of a Dr. Renke. This chivalrous gentleman allowed her a cottage to herself and liberty to do what she pleased, provided she delivered to him her children free of charge for nurture at the age of 10. She lived, had 13 children, 4 of whom died in infancy and the rest went to her master on the above condition. Emily earned money and purchased her own liberty. It was her intention to purchase that of her family; but the owner would not wait. It was his plan to sell them as soon as they were marketable. Two fled from him and took their liberty.—Two were sold to the soul-drivers at a tender age, and both the father and mother labored in vain to rescue them. As the last act, the father, who had been permitted by his master to visit them at Charlestown, Va., crept into the jail-yard, and awakening them hauled out the youngest through the grate of the window. The older was too much grown to follow. "We must go," said the father, and leave poor George to be sold. "No," said the little boy, "I will go back and be sold with him." And he crept back through the grate and they were sent to the south!

Emily it seems contrived to get the younger children out of the possession of Renke into that of Taylor who owned the father. It was her plan to raise money to purchase them all. But Taylor was impatient at the slowness of the operation and was about to sell them all, and it was at this time that the heroic mother—with Virginia's "best blood" in her veins, interested Mr. Torrey to

interfere. One night John Webb with his youngest child in his arms and another at his side left the patriarchal roof of Bushrod Taylor, and Torrey met them with team and vehicle and helped them on their way to freedom. This is the foundation of that charge for which proud Virginia will now have to bring her requisition in the court of heaven, to get hold of the fugitive from *her* justice!

As to Heckrotte's slaves, the ground of the Maryland prosecution, Mr. Torrey never saw them till they were 30 miles from Baltimore. He had not the slightest hand in enticing them from their master, and might at any time have cleared himself by giving up the name of the perpetrator of that deed which he honorably refused to do. It was at the instance of a most respectable lady of Baltimore, who planned their escape and could get no one else to assist in it, that he consented to drive the carriage which took them out of the state of bondage."

On the last charge, though not actually criminal by the laws of Maryland, Mr. Torrey was sentenced to six years' imprisonment. Early last winter, it was evident his health was suffering by his confinement, and his physicians decided that liberation alone could save his life.—That he might be restored as the husband and father of his family, his friends labored to effect his release. Negotiations were entered into with the agrieved parties—some hundreds of dollars were raised to pay them the value they put upon their slaves, on condition Mr. Torrey should be pardoned and liberated. After it was supposed the Virginia and Maryland cases were both adjusted, Heckrotte fell back—and the whole plan was defeated. In the mean time, Mr. Torrey's health continued to decline; and as it became evident he must soon die, respectful petitions were addressed to the Governor of Maryland, from the most influential citizens of Massachusetts, and from his afflicted wife, that he might be pardoned and permitted—not to go at large and enjoy life, but return to the bosom of his family and die in their embrace. To comply, the Governor had full authority; not the least danger could follow; so far as justice or punishment in the eye of slave laws was regarded, both had been fully answered, for his life *had virtually been taken.* But no: the entreaties of the wife of his bosom, bending at the feet of the Governor, nor the prayers of the most distinguished citizens of his native State could avail—there was no place in the slaveholder's heart for the exercise of generous compassion.

The Baltimore Visitor states that Mr. Torrey "died with that calmness of resignation which became him, and yet hardly to be anticipated in a death watched over by

only the eye of prison officials, rather than that of the friends of his home and heart, whose soothing voices and careful ministrations are no trifles in the estimation of the departing." So he must die alone; no wife, or mother or sister to smooth his dying pillow, or relieve his distresses in his passage to the tomb.

Mr. Torrey ever felt conscious that he was guilty of no crime against God or man in this matter. He had acted from the kindest and purest motives, and, knowing his integrity, he had no regret in his death. Although strongly urged to acknowledge he had done wrong, on which his prison doors would have been opened, he remained true to the conviction of his own heart of what was right, with an unyielding firmness, worthy the noblest martyrs of the church. One week previous to his death, he wrote to a friend:

"How can I consent to a doctrine, which my heart, my conscience and my judgment, based on careful examination when no possible motive of self interest could bias me, led me to reject as opposed to the Bible and right reason? I may be erroneous in my views, for I am a fallible man; but this is no place, nor am I in a condition now, to review my settled opinions respecting the relations of Christianity to those civil laws which are contrary to natural justice and the law of God. It is better to die in prison with the peace of God in our breasts, than to live in freedom with a polluted conscience."

The church in Worcester of which Mr. Torrey was a member, deputed their pastor to visit their dying fellow member in his prison. When his pastor first saw him, he was so emaciated that he hardly recognized him; but he found him in a very desirable frame of mind. Rev. Dr. Welch, of the Baptist church, Albany, visited Mr. Torrey at the same time, who says he "has rarely if ever seen a more triumphant death-bed."

Still he may be censured. For what; for helping men to freedom? Our fathers declared in '76 that *all* men are *entitled* to freedom and sealed that declaration with the blood of the revolution. Did he violate civil law to deliver the oppressed? What was the example in this respect and the principle taught, by our struggle for freedom from the power of the oppressor? But, allowing he did go farther than what we may think judicious; what led him to the act but the promptings of an unconquerable zeal in a righteous cause? Did he violate law? it was a law against humanity, against love and mercy, and truth and justice—against God. And which is the most criminal, to possess so much of benevolence and holy ardor, as to be impelled a little beyond the bounds, of what may be called discretion; or to remain so destitute of generous.

philanthropic, pious zeal, as not to engage in the cause of humanity; but to endure the curse of Meroz for not coming to the help of the Lord against the mighty. But if *we* censure, future ages will approve. How must it astonish generations to come, to learn that in the 19th century, in this land of freedom, of Bibles and christian institutions, a minister of the gospel of Christ was doomed to die a felon's death in a prison, for a deed of mercy; a deed which the universe will approve, which God and all holy intelligencies will most assuredly sanction. Mr. Torrey violated no law that can stand the test of the millenial day or the decisions of the law of God. He followed out one of the holiest impulses of our nature. He acted upon the great law of God in the equality of mankind. "Hide the outcast; bewray not him that wandereth," is the divine injunction; "deliver him that is spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor." He did this and it cost him his liberty and life. He acted upon the great law of humanity—common law—the charter given by God of human liberty; he assisted his brother, unrighteously held in bondage, to break his chains, and led him to the land of freedom. Human nature has applauded such deeds from the time of the creation to the present. If in the struggles of the Grecians or the Poles, he had rescued one of either from Turkish despotism or Russian captivity, his patriotism and valor would have been heralded through our land, and his praises shouted to the skies.—And, because those for whom he felt and toiled and died, were *Americans*, though oppressed and degraded, has he less claims on our gratitude and respect? But further, he acted on still higher authority—the authority of the great Divine law-giver, who, more than 1800 years ago declared, "all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them, *for this is the law;*" and by this, universal, immutable and perpetual LAW, Mr. Torrey stands acquitted before Heaven and Earth. If in some measure he is liable to be considered indiscreet, still, can we doubt the purity of his motives.—He was actuated by no feeling of revenge—or malice; he had no wish to injure, but was prompted by a love of mercy, justice, and humanity. And when we contemplate him in his relation to God and eternity, we cannot doubt but ere this, his Saviour has welcomed him to the joys of Paradise, with "the cheering recognition, worth more than all human applause—incalculably outweighing all human censure.—*Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of these my brethren, you have done it unto me.*"

How many more victims must be offered, or how much more blood flow, before the demands of slavery shall have

been answered, time must reveal. But the death-knell of Torrey should make the ears of this whole nation tingle, and awake this entire people from their fearful slumbers. The signs of the times are ominous—the cries of oppressed millions are going up daily to God for redress, and the blood of martyrs to freedom calls for vengeance. Is not the cup of our iniquity fast filling up, and is there not cause of alarm in the foreboding future? Our personal, civil, and religious interests are all involved, in the integrity and perpetuity of our national government. Our duty and welfare call loudly upon us to repent and put away every sin. Obstinacy or indifference, is but a prelude to certain overthrow and destruction.

Finally, the present is a time for thought, for feeling, for action. The friends of truth are stationed on the enemy's ground, and must fight to the death. While our rulers are calling for volunteers to go forth and slay their fellows—the great Captain of our Salvation is calling for soldiers, valiant for the truth, to enlist in his service and attack the powers of error and darkness at every post.—No matter what be the sin—or where it may be found; it is opposed to truth and to God, and the final triumph of the gospel. Arm, then, ye friends of righteousness, arm for the battle and march to the conflict. Put on the whole armour of God, and through Almighty strength, victory shall be won for our King. The enemy shall be destroyed, and his strong-holds demolished. Intemperance, slavery, licentiousness, and the long catalogue of damning sins, shall be swept away. This world is yet to be reclaimed—no part of it will be left; but "over all, the loveliness and purity of Eden are again to return.—Over all, Christ is to reign, and to reign through the instrumentality of his people." Oh, then, let faith and prayer, and repentance and holy zeal, contribute to hasten that day, the day of Immanuel's glory.

Then shall man be *free*—redeemed and saved through the truth. Then shall love, peace and holiness abound. Then shall be heard one universal anthem of a world reclaimed, through the conquests of truth, and every kindred, and tongue, and people, shall shout the loud chorus—while

"Earth rolls the rapturous hosanna round,"

JEHOVAH HAS TRIUMPHED, HIS PEOPLE ARE FREE.

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